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Mr. Bruce

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: May 29, 1952

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SUBJECT: Latvian Affairs

PARTICIPANTS:

The Acting Secretary
Mr. Charles Zarine, Latvian Minister at London
Mr. Jules Feldmans, the Latvian Charge d'Affaires
H. C. Vedeler, EE

COPIES TO:

EUR - Mr. Perkins
Mr. Bonbright
EE - Mr. Barbour
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Mr. Davis
BNA - Mr. Beale
American Embassy, London

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In calling today to pay his respects during a brief visit to the US, the Latvian Minister at London said that he wished to take this occasion as the Senior Latvian Diplomatic Representative to express the gratitude of Latvians, both those at home and those abroad, for the policy of the US toward the Baltic countries and for the leadership of the US at this critical time in the struggle against Communism. He believed that the US would not abandon this leadership in which so many people had placed their hopes in the great conflict of the Christian world against the Bolshevik forces of evil.

After alluding to the attitude of the US toward the Latvian diplomatic representatives, Minister Zarine explained their position at London in connection with the British de facto but not de jure recognition of the incorporation of the Baltic countries into the USSR. While the Latvian representatives were not on the official British diplomatic list as they were in this country, they enjoyed diplomatic privileges and, in practice, had free access as if fully recognized diplomatic officials to the Foreign Office. An aspect of British policy which had not been helpful was the cloak of silence extended over the subject of the Baltic countries, which the UK Government endeavored carefully to avoid. He appealed to us to mention the Baltic countries by name whenever we referred to the other captive countries of Eastern Europe, or to the countries to be liberated. This would mean a great deal to the Baltic peoples in helping to maintain their hope by showing they are not forgotten by the West.

The Minister then raised the subject of the desire of some of the Latvian emigres, particularly younger ones, to advance their efforts by forming a government-in-exile. He said that the British do not look favorably upon any such

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undertaking and that he wished to know our views. I suggested that it was not our policy to encourage the establishment of an organization of this type. Under the existing circumstances such a body appeared to serve no useful purpose and would only be considered by US as a private organization.

The Minister covered the foregoing ground discussively but with feeling and the utmost sincerity. I said that I was confident that he had done a fine work in his efforts to sustain the spirits of the Latvians and that he could be sure our policy toward his country would not change. He reiterated his appreciation for the chance to call and to express his gratitude.

David K. Bruce

EUR:EE:HCVedaler:rr

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